

## A Puny Punch by a Big Texas

# Walker Dramatizes Weakness Of Zealots of the Radical Right

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(From an ABC Broadcast)

Former Maj. Gen. Edwin A. Walker unknowingly struck a blow for sanity and reasonableness when he socked Washington News reporter Tom Kelly in the eye instead of answering a question.

The puny punch the 6-foot, 200-pound Texan landed on the 66-inch, 155-pound correspondent was no punier than the pokes he had taken in two days of hobgoblin testimony at the U. S. government and just as wild.

But more than all the words that Walker had so much trouble with as a witness before the Senate's "muzzling of the military" inquiry, this one physical



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gesture dramatized the main weakness and chief difficulty of the zealots of the radical right whom this unhappy man represents: so steeped are they in sheer ignorance of the world about them and so consumed by an almost animal fear of an imagined unknown that in their frustration they hit out hysterically at anybody in sight.

Thus the ex-general's right jab furnished a valuable example of the nature of right-wing extremism and should deflate this sorry phenomenon once and for all to its true and piffling dimensions. What it will do to Walker's reportedly fading bid for the governorship of Texas remains to be seen.

**WALKER'S ATTEMPT** on the stand to implicate the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense and other high government officials in an international conspiracy to be soft on communism, sounded more like a Halloween prank than the serious testimony of a West Point graduate with an illustrious combat record. As one senator observed sadly, "It—his testimony—was so bad it may prove in the long run to be good."

But the blow the soldier-turned-politician unconsciously struck to bring the rest of us to a sharper sense of perspective can only yield maximum good if we pause to recognize the emptiness of his charges—and in turn the hollow shell of whispered suspicions which is virtually all the far-right-wing fanatics have to stand on.

If, as he admitted under questioning, Walker had not read and thus knew nothing directly about any of the books and authors he implied were subversive, it is not surprising that he was equally ignorant of the records and characters of other persons he so fervently and irresponsibly maligned.

**TAKE, FOR EXAMPLE,** the case of the special assistant to the chief of staff, McNamara, Adam Yarmolinsky, whom Walker accused of Communist sympathies and of being one of the "big boys" of the country.

At the time Yarmolinsky is tailor-made

to fill the role of subversive in the haunted imaginations of super-patriots. He has a foreign-sounding name. A slight, short pixie-like man of 40 with unruly hair and a suspiciously egg-head-type bow tie, he is the kind of civilian the military inevitably labels as an odd-ball. He is a Harvard man who got his law degree from Yale. His father has long been active in liberal politics in New York City. His mother writes poetry.

In 1955 he published a monumental study of the federal loyalty-security program financed by the Fund for the Republic. Though not questioning the need for a program it was critical of many injustices. In his specially reserved parking space at the Pentagon, Yarmolinsky leaves not a respectable car but an outrageously tattered jeep. A carelessly written syndicated column recently characterized him as a sinister mystery man in the Department of Defense.

What more perfect type-casting for a villain could Walker ask? Especially when Yarmolinsky had long since admitted that in high school—against his parents' advice—he had attended a couple of meetings of the Young Communist League out of a curiosity which was quickly disillusioned.

The man, of course, is the opposite of Walker's dilated image. Checked, needless to say, by the FBI in clearance for his present post, Yarmolinsky has a public record of anti-Communist activities. In 1946 he helped the American Veterans Committee clean its house of Communists and was duly attacked by the Daily Worker. He had been one of the founders of an anti-Communist student group at Harvard and he exposed the Communist line of the American Youth Committee in 1941.

**BUT WHAT IS HE DOING** in the Pentagon anyway, a gremlin-like un-uniformed, un-orthodox civilian with the ear of the secretary in the midst of all that brass? He has grappled with such complicated problems as the conflict of interest among scientists working for the government with alluring offers from industry with the involved matter of controlling of research and development projects; with how to get military dependents abroad without gouging our balance of payments and how to cut our expenditures without coming out of defense treaty commitments.

There is little mystery about these assignments; they are just tough, thankless tasks. Yarmolinsky's first job there was to get civil defense under way under the Pentagon's wing. In the process he became convinced of the need of a national shelter program, a stand which drew him into sharp conflict with other leading liberals.

Possibly the main reason that Adam Yarmolinsky is working in the Pentagon for one of the most brilliant Defense secretaries on record is that he, too, has brains and uses them to think instead of to unthink. This can be done in Washington these days and it shows how far we have come from the dark ages of McCarthyism.